

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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### PROPOSED FEDERAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION FISCAL YEARS 2005-2010

July 1, 2004

#### Abstract

The preparation of the *Federal Capital Improvements Program for the National Capital Region, Fiscal Years 2005-2010*, has been underway since August 2003, when the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) asked federal departments and agencies to provide information on proposed projects. Staff has reviewed the submitted project information for conformity with the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital*, federal agency master plans, and other adopted plans and policies and has prepared the *Proposed Federal Capital Improvements Program for the National Capital Region, Fiscal Years 2005-2010* for public review and comment.

#### Commission Action Requested

Authorization to circulate the proposed program for a 45-day review and comment period. Adoption of the *Federal Capital Improvements Program for the National Capital Region, Fiscal Years 2005-2010* pursuant to Section 7 of the National Capital Planning Act (40 U.S.C. § 8723(a)) is tentatively scheduled for the Thursday, September 9, 2004 Commission meeting.

#### Executive Director's Recommendation

Authorize circulation of the *Proposed Federal Capital Improvements Program for the National Capital Region, Fiscal Years 2005-2010*, for review and comment by federal departments and agencies, regional agencies, state and local governments, and interested organizations and individuals.

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## BACKGROUND

In accordance with the National Capital Planning Act and the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) circular No. A-11, *Preparation, Submission and Execution of the Budget*, agencies are required to submit their planned capital improvement programs within the National Capital Region to NCPC. The Commission evaluates agencies' capital projects within these programs and makes recommendations in the six-year Federal Capital Improvements Program (FCIP). OMB uses NCPC's recommendations as guidance while reaching budgetary decisions on these projects. The Commission also uses the information it receives for the FCIP to coordinate federal projects with state and local governments at the earliest possible time.

The Commission's recommendations are based on the extent proposed projects conform to general planning and development policies in the region as described in plans and programs adopted by the Commission, regional planning bodies, and local and state governments. In particular, the Commission reviews projects for their conformity with Commission approved site and building plans, Commission approved installation master plans, and Commission released plans and program. The first year of this proposed FCIP represents funding requests contained in the President's fiscal year 2005 budget (the capital budget) transmitted to the Congress in early 2004. Projects scheduled in the second to sixth year (the capital program) involve extended funding, or are new projects that will be scheduled year-by-year until they are ready for funding consideration.

The Commission's recommendations and comments within the FCIP do not represent approval or denial of proposed projects. Inclusion of projects within the FCIP are not to be construed or represented to constitute Commission review of development or project plans pursuant to Section 5 of the National Capital Planning Act, or any other applicable statute.

## PROGRAM ANALYSIS

The federal government is active in the construction of a number of major projects throughout the region. Because of this construction activity, many of the significant projects in previous FCIPs have had funds fully appropriated by Congress and are therefore no longer within the FCIP. Significant project's within last year's FCIP that have received full appropriations include the Bureau of the Census Campus, the Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House Security and Landscape Improvement Project, and Security Enhancements for the Washington Monument Grounds and Jefferson Memorial. In addition, the World War II Memorial and Vietnam Veterans Memorial Plaque are fully funded (primarily through private funds).

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“Recommended and Strongly Endorsed” Category

Section 4 of the National Capital Planning Act (40 U.S.C. § 8721(a)) requires that NCPC prepare and adopt a “comprehensive, consistent, and coordinated plan for the National Capital.” The Comprehensive Plan is NCPC’s blueprint for the long-term development of the national capital and is the decision-making framework for Commission actions on plans and proposals submitted for its review.

The “Recommended and Strongly Endorsed” category of project recommendations was introduced in the FCIP, FYs 2003-2008. This year staff revised the criteria for projects within this category to be consistent with the main themes of the draft Federal Elements of the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital*, released by the Commission for public review and comment on March 4, 2004.

Projects “Recommended and Strongly Endorsed” highlight capital projects that are critical to strategically advancing and implementing key Commission planning policies and initiatives, or important federal interests within the region. A federal department or agency submits these projects to the FCIP, or they are future projects recommended by the Commission. Projects submitted by the Commission for this recommendation typically are within Commission plans including *Extending the Legacy: Planning America's Capital for the 21st Century*, the Draft Federal Elements of the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital*, the *National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan*, and the *Memorials and Museums Master Plan*.

Criteria for proposed projects “Recommended and Strongly Endorsed” change annually based on current critical planning objectives. For the 2005-2010 FCIP, “Recommended and Strongly Endorsed” is defined as follows:

This category includes projects submitted by federal agencies or recommended by the Commission that are critical to strategically advancing and implementing specific Commission and/or local planning policies and development initiatives; clearly defined federal interests and objectives; federal agency system plans; master plans for individual installations; or Commission-approved site and building plans.

These projects are major or significant new construction projects, rehabilitation and modernization projects, or land acquisition projects that may do one or more of the following:

- Contribute to the operational efficiency and productivity of the federal government by promoting opportunities to take advantage of existing public infrastructure and/or adapting and reusing existing historic and underutilized facilities.
- Improve the security of federal workers, federal activities, and visitors to the National Capital in a manner that complements and enhances the character of an ~~area without impeding commerce and economic vitality.~~

- Protect and unify the historic and symbolic infrastructure of the Monumental Core and the District. These projects include new, rehabilitated and/or modernized memorials, museums, historic parks, federal agency and department headquarters facilities, historic streets, and other infrastructure.
- Restore the quality of the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers and associated waterways and improve public access to waterfront areas.
- Advance regional public transportation and other infrastructure that promotes the orientation of new development towards public transit and into compact land use patterns. Promote the use of non-automobile transportation alternatives including walking and biking.
- Contribute significantly to the protection of environmental and natural resources.
- Anchor or promote community development and substantially contribute to the physical and economic improvement of surrounding areas.

The draft FCIP, FYs 2005-2010, proposes that the Commission recommend and strongly endorse the following new projects submitted by agencies:

Department of the Interior, National Park Service

- Meridian Hill (2)

This project follows the restoration of the historic Lodgehouse by repairing and preserving landscape and other historic elements (including fountain and pool elements) and rehabilitating operational areas (such as storage and maintenance areas).

Smithsonian Institution

- Construct/Install Anti-Terrorism Protection:

The project improves the security of federal activities and visitors by minimizing the potential damage to Smithsonian Institution facilities and collections should a terrorist attack take place.

- Restore Arts and Industries Building:

The project modernizes a National Historic Landmark located on the National Mall that due to its poor and dangerous condition the Smithsonian Institution will completely vacate by fiscal year 2005. Restoration of the building contributes to the protection and unification of the historic and symbolic infrastructure of the Monumental Core.

In addition to these new projects, three projects submitted by the Commission and “Recommended for Future Programming” in previous FCIPs are now within the “Recommended and Strongly Endorsed” category in the Proposed FCIP, FYs 2005-2010. These projects are:

- South Capitol Street Reconstruction, and the
- New Frederick Douglas Memorial Bridge

South Capitol Street and the Frederick Douglas Memorial Bridge constitute a gateway and approach to the nation’s capital—to Capitol Hill and the National Mall. Together with Suitland Parkway this is the ceremonial route for dignitaries arriving at Andrews Air Force Base. The design proposal is of a grand boulevard worthy of the national significance of this corridor. Associated open spaces (major public plazas, parkland and other amenities) will be commensurate with this level of national significance and provide a setting for future national monuments, memorials and museums. South Capitol Street is planned to provide access to existing and future federal development at the Navy Yard, the Southeast Federal Center area, Capitol Hill and the Southwest Federal Center. This corridor will provide the capacity necessary to serve as an evacuation route in case of emergency.

In cooperation with the District of Columbia, in 2002 the Commission produced The South Capitol Street Urban Design Study. In November 2003 the Commission, in partnership with the District of Columbia, engaged the Urban Land Institute (ULI) to convene an Advisory Services Panel to assist in the identification of implementation alternatives for the redevelopment of the South Capitol Street. In May 2004 the Commission also established a South Capitol Street Task Force to assist in implementation. On June 8, 2004 the Secretary of the Department of Transportation and District of Columbia Mayor signed a Memorandum of Agreement to pledge to rebuild the Douglass Bridge and to redevelop the South Capitol Street corridor.

- Railroad Relocation Feasibility Study

Washington’s downtown freight and passenger railroad system is a key constraint to urban revitalization south of the Capitol and a potential security risk. The existing rail alignment poses constraints to future rail service improvements and potential security and safety concerns to adjacent federal facilities and residential neighborhoods. Relocation of this portion of the regional railroad system will improve the security of federal workers and federal activities while substantially contributing to the physical and economic improvement of Southeast and Southwest Washington. Preparation of a Railroad Relocation Feasibility Study is a key Commission initiative.

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Proposed Program Summary

The Proposed FCIP, FYs 2005-2010 contains a total of 213 proposed projects. Of this total, 174 are recommended for funding and 39 are recommended for future programming.

The estimated total cost of proposed projects for fiscal years 2005-2010 is \$8,403,670,000. This does not include the 39 projects recommended for future programming since they do not contain estimated budgets.

Of the 174 projects recommended for funding, NCPC strongly endorses funding for 37. These projects are critical to strategically advancing and implementing significant Commission and local planning policies and key planning initiatives, as well as other important federal interests. NCPC further recommends funding for 129 projects that are considered in conformance with Commission and local plans and planning policies, and 8 projects where funding should be programmed but NCPC requests that a particular planning issue of a project be further addressed prior to submission of the project for Commission review and approval.

The number of projects, the total costs of these projects, and the allocation of the total program costs among major jurisdictions is in the following table (the table does not include projects recommended for future programming):

	Number of Projects	Total Cost Program Costs (000,000)	Percent of Total
<b>District of Columbia</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>3,670</b>	<b>43.6</b>
<b>Maryland</b>			
Montgomery County	23	1,705	20.4
Prince George's County	45	766	9.1
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>2,471</b>	<b>29.5</b>
<b>Virginia</b>			
Arlington County	16	993	11.8
Fairfax County	11	372	4.4
Prince William County	1	21	0.3
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1,386</b>	<b>16.5</b>
<b>National Capital Region</b> (The Wilson Bridge Replacement)	<b>1</b>	<b>876</b>	<b>10.4</b>
<b>Total Region</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>8,404</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Of the 39 projects that have been submitted by NCPC and recommended for future programming, NCPC strongly endorses 16 that are critical to strategically advancing and implementing significant Commission and local planning policies and key planning initiatives, as well as other important federal interests. NCPC further recommends that the appropriate agencies program the remaining 23 in their budgets as soon as fiscal and budgetary conditions permit.

## PROGRAM INITIATIVES

Over the last two years, NCPC initiated changes to the FCIP to reflect a new effort on the part of the Commission to improve the usefulness and effectiveness of federal programming activities in the region. In particular, the Commission worked with OMB to strengthen its requirement for agencies to provide capital project information to the Commission in advance of making commitments for new development projects within the National Capital Region. As a result, OMB strengthened its language within its Circular A-11, a guide to agencies for their annual submission of budget estimates, and agreed to cosign an annual letter from NCPC requesting agencies to submit their capital programs to the Commission for review.

The Commission also implemented the new recommendation category—projects “Recommended and Strongly Endorsed.” In addition, the Commission included a complete list of projects within the program for which the Commission recommends agencies include in their capital programs within the next few years. These are projects for which the Commission is currently involved in the planning of, or for which the Commission has adopted a specific policy or implementation strategy.

Finally, the Commission reformatted the published program so that it is an easier tool to use for local and regional capital project analysis and planning purposes. While continuing to include all information contained in prior FCIPs, the new format reduced headings to improve readability and organized proposed projects by political jurisdiction. This reformatting of the program has been continued this year to further improve upon the readability of the Proposed FCIP, FYs 2005-2010.

With the passage of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, OMB is placing increased emphasis on linking federal agency program resources with performance. Having identified the FCIP as an important management reform initiative, OMB consults the Commission's recommendations when making capital budget decisions.

To receive recommendations to add more value to the government's budget process through the FCIP, NCPC staff met with OMB in April 2004. OMB provided a number of recommendations on the FCIP that could better inform OMB examiners when they are making budget decisions regarding federal capital projects within the region.

NCPC examined OMB's recommendations and developed changes to this year's Proposed FCIP, FYs 2005-2010. Below is a description of these changes.

New Program Initiatives, 2004 (Proposed FCIP, FYs 2005-2010)

In response to OMB's recommended changes to the FCIP, the following changes to the published document were made in this Proposed FCIP, FYs 2005-2010:

- OMB requested that NCPC move the list with projects by agency in the Appendices forward in the document. Individual OMB examiners review all of each agency's projects; a list of projects by agency is more helpful to them than if the projects are listed by geographical jurisdiction. Within this published proposed FCIP, the list of projects by agency is at the start of the Project Recommendations section.
- OMB stated that, within the Project Recommendations section of the published program, the numbering of project descriptions within each agency listing could imply a priority. Within this published proposed FCIP, the numbers that could cause this confusion are removed.

#### REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATION PROPOSALS

It has been the Commission's practice to circulate the proposed FCIP prior to adoption of the program. During a 45-day period, federal departments and agencies, state and local governments, and interested organizations and citizens have the opportunity to review the program and submit their comments. This practice informs affected agencies, organizations, and citizens early in the planning process about federal projects proposed within the region during the next six years. A primary objective of this review is to promote intergovernmental coordination in the region regarding projected federal land acquisition and development proposals. Such coordination helps to address concerns regarding a project at the earliest possible time, avoid delays at the time of formal review, and results in overall improvements in the regional economy.

NCPC staff addresses all comments received during this period and presents them when the FCIP, FYs 2005-2010 is before the Commission for adoption. The FCIP, FYs 2005-2010, is tentatively scheduled to be presented to the Commission at its meeting on Thursday, September 9, 2004.